

beside "Thou shalt not sow thy field with two kinds of seed," Lev. 19: 18, 19. . . . The whole law, in all its parts, has the same form of absolute, unconditional command. . . .

In these points lies what has been called the unfreedom and externality of the Mosaic law, a thing which has often been incorrectly assumed. For it is not true that the law of Moses demands only external conformity to the law--only the opus operatum, not a frame of mind; that, in short, it demands legality, not morality. On the contrary, the law insists on the disposition of the heart when it says, Ex. 20:17, "Thou shalt not covet"; when it binds men to love God with the whole heart and soul, to be placable toward their fellow-men, and the like, Deut. 6:5, Lev. 19: 17 f.; when it demands the circumcision of the heart--that is, the purification and devotion of it to God, Deut. 10:16 (cf. also Josh. 22:5, 23:11). But undoubtedly, as has been remarked, it demands the external as co-ordinate with the internal. And precisely in this lies an important educating element. When all the relations of life, even those merely external, are placed under a direct command of God--when man in all he does or may not do has to render obedience to God, he is thereby led to the truth that what he ought to be is not to be sought in rules of life arbitrarily formed and shaped by conventionality, but in an absolutely perfect will, which conditions and determines all things. The revealed law, it is true, here undertakes the functions of conscience; . . . By bringing man to a consciousness of the essential nature of a higher divine righteousness, the law roused the conscience from its slumber, taught men to recognize wickedness as sin, and so made the need of reconciliation with God to be felt.

For a right estimate of the law of Moses, the following points have further to be noticed:-- 1. All the ritual ordinances to which the Israelite is subject, from his circumcision onward, have a symbolic character, mirroring the inner process of sanctification, and so forming the instrument of a tuition advancing from the outer to the inner. . . . 2. The precepts of the law are given in detail mainly on the negative side; what the Israelite may not do is told with great particularity. . . with regard to positive duties the law often states only general rules; that, in fact, many positive points that lie in its intention are not expressly enjoined, but that only the facts, patterns, and institutions are set forth which serve to guide a free development of positive virtues. . . . 3. Finally,--and this is the main point,-- we have to look at the motives for fulfilling the law which the law presents. All righteousness required by the law presupposes faith in the divine election, gracious guidance, and promise.

Solomon Schechter, in his book Aspects of Rabbinic Theology, states that:

To the great majority of the Rabbis . . . the Torah was simply the manifestation of God's will, revealed to us for our good; the pedagogue, as the Rabbis expressed it, who educates God's creatures. The preoccupation with the Torah was, according to the Rabbis, less calculated to produce schoolmen and jurists than saints and devout spirits. "Who-soever labours in the Torah for its own sake, merits many things" (says R. Meir) . . . "He is called friend, beloved, a lover of God, a lover of mankind; it clothes him in meekness and fear (of God), and fits him to become righteous, pious, and upright; it keeps him far from sin, brings towards the side of virtue, and gives him sovereignty and dominion and discerning judgment. To him the secrets of the Torah are revealed; he becomes a never failing fountain, he grows modest and